

FLORA'S REVIEW

BY

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ARRANGED BY

THE URSULINES

OF NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y.



NOTRE DAME, INDIANA
THE AVE MARIA

CHARACTERS.



Flora. Queen of Flowers (tall).

Rose (tall).

Calla Lily (tall).

Lily of Valley (short).

Water Lily (short).

Mignonette (short).

Forget-me-not (short).

Night Jessamine (tall).

Violet (short).

Daisy (tall).

Buttercup (short).

Columbine (tall).

Lilac (tall).

Chrysanthemum (tall).

Snowball (tall).

Dandelion (short).

Maids of Honor (short).

COSTUMES.



All white dresses.

Flora. With wreath or crown of all flowers, and profusely decorated.

Maids of Honor. As the Queen, but only a knot of flowers in hair, and garlands from shoulders, according to taste.

Each of the Flowers should have a bouquet of her own flower at corsage and on the head, and a garland of the smaller flowers, which she holds up while speaking and marching.



This little play affords opportunity for the introduction of many entertaining evolutions, such as marching, dancing, ring exercise, or wands; also appropriate music and songs may be interspersed as taste suggests.

The chorus, as in text, may be spoken by one or in concert, or sung to any air to which the words may be adapted.

FLORA'S REVIEW.

SCENE.—Woodland or a lawn or garden terrace. A raised platform or bank for Queen. Discovered, Queen surrounded by the flowers in double semicircles, the taller ones back ; standing in phalanx, if there is a curtain ; but if there is an open stage, the Queen enters, preceded by her maids, and takes position on bank ; while the flowers enter from right and left, crossing in front of stage, and taking places opposite side whence they entered. The Queen waves her wand as she enters, and continues until the flowers are in position. The little ones, with garlands waving, sing.

Chorus.

We flowers, gay flowers,
Are the stars of the earth.
From bright, sunny bowers
We bring glad tidings,
And rejoice at our birth.

(Dance, and take places in front of tall ones.)

Queen.

Hail, fair ones of Flora's realm ! We greet you,
and would know of your mission to earth.

Chorus.

From forest, from hillside,
From moorland and glen,
We hasten the message
God sends unto men !
We come with our offerings
At this gay festal-tide,
That Flora, our Queen,
May our merits decide.

Queen (to Forget-me-not).

Sweet floweret, what sayest thou? What is thy wish to teach the watching, waiting tribes of earth in this the glad summer time?

Forget-me-not (bowing).

Fairest of Queens, I would say to them: Heed my words: "Forget-me-not!" I am not gay, I am not dazzling; I do not live in solitary grandeur as the Tulip. I am simple and quiet. I have intimate association with my kindred flowerets; and, unitedly, we seek to accomplish that which would be out of the power of single, isolated effort. Our language is but the echoing voices of the poor, the sorrowing, the distressed, appealing to those on whom Heaven has bestowed bountifully of temporal blessings.

Queen.

Thou art indeed, little Forget-me-not, a pleading angel, and wilt surely reap a rich reward, even though thy valued treasure be garnered only in thy own heart.

Mignonette, thou little treasure, what may I hope to hear from thee?

Mignonette.

Beloved Lady Flora, thou knowest that it is said of me that I show forth man's moral and intellectual worth. Doubtless, it seems strange that I, apparently so insignificant, should teach so much by my natural combination. But let me explain. I bloom in every land, in every clime, and secretly emit the most fragrant odors; thus showing to man that his

moral nature need not be impeded by any environment, but may become more and still more elevated, whether the body languish beneath a tropical sun or shiver in the polar regions. The odors of a holy life will make purer the mental atmosphere by which he is surrounded. Man's intellectual nature is illustrated by me, in that, if I am uncared for, neglected, I die as an annual, without having attained that degree of strength which Nature intended me to possess. If, on the contrary, I am properly cultivated, I become a perennial, strong as the oak [*archly*], though not so lofty. So the human intellect, when not properly cared for, never reaches the climax of greatness for which it was designed by the Great Creator. But when drawn out, and exercised in weary searches after hidden lore, the grasp of the human mind becomes strong as the oak, and its aspirations soar heavenward as its highest branches.

Queen.

Mignonette, thine is surely a heavenly mission, which can not fail to gather much fruit into the gardens of Paradise.

(*To Night Jessamine.*)

Child of the still hour so serenely bright,
 That blooms not 'mid the blaze of day,
 But sweetest perfume sheds at night
 When not even stars their cheering ray
 Cast 'thwart the gloom profound:
 What sayest thou?

Night Jessamine.

Noble Queen, I would say this: that I come

when the fair and more gorgeously arrayed subjects of your sweet realm have grown weary of displaying their beauty and charms and courting the glances of an admiring world, during the happy hours of sunshine, and have withdrawn themselves to seek for rest and repose; I come forth and scatter fragrance around, that I may therewith bless and refresh those who are downcast and oppressed. In this I am the emblem of true friendship, which in the night of adversity comes forth to soothe and comfort the sorrowing and afflicted wherever they may be.

I was born to cheer life's loneliest hour,
When sunshine friends have flown,
And true ones still, as dark clouds lower
In softest colors, then are shown.
When good deeds virtues crown,
I am Friendship's emblem, pure and holy
As an infant's earliest dream.

Summer friends may forsake us, daydreams may fade, but true friendship ceases not even in death.

Queen.

I greet thee, Jessamine, of odor sweet!
Pale but beautiful thou art;
Thy rich and spicy fragrance meet
Moments when, from the world apart,
Thought's fullest joys abound.

Be it thine, O Jessamine, to retain thine own innate purity and benevolence untarnished by the baneful influence of worldly minds!

(To the Violet.)

Dear wilding Violet, what say you to the children of earth?

Violet.

I show with what peacefulness of heart,
 Fair Queen, I gaze upon the crowd apart;
 My blue and meekly joyful eyes
 As undisturbed, as tranquil as the skies;
 Retaining still kind Nature's simple grace,
 Unmindful of the joys or ills of place;
 Sweet refreshment, which the aspiring mind
 Can in my lowly bloom and beauty find,—
 Sweet refreshment, that with blindest touch
 Soothes to repose the heart that asks too much;
 The claiming wish subdued, its ache forgot,
 While a mild presence charms my weary spot;
 Life's tuneful harmony at once restored
 At Nature's humblest minion's gentle word.*

Queen.

Lowly sweet Violet, thine is truly a heaven-born mission.

(To the Daisy.)

Fair and peaceful Daisy, "smiling in the grass,"
 "the poet's darling"; for verily thou art the Day's
 eye. Who has said, "The Rose" (*looking shyly at the Rose*)
 "has but a summer reign, the Daisy never dies"?

Daisy.

In the summer morning
 Through the fields we shine,
 Joyfully adorning
 Earth with grace divine,
 And pour from sunny hearts
 Fresh gladness into thine.

* E. A. Starr.

When our day is over
Peacefully we fade,
With the fragrant clover
In sweet grasses laid.*

Queen.

Happy, happy Daisy, fresh with morning dew!
Ever in thy heart to heaven's sunshine true.

Lovely thou art! In spirit and in form
A sunbeam glancing through life's tears,
A rainbow through the storm.

(*To the Buttercup.*)

Whom have we here?

Buttercup.

Fair Queen, I wear the dress,—
That once my mother wore,
You may remember having seen
A Buttercup before.
They say I'm but an idle weed,
As useless as I'm gay;
But dearly the children love me
And look for me the long bright summer's day
And surely 'tis not useless
To make *them* glad and gay.

Queen.

Ah, well I know your sunshine-loving race!
'Twere sad indeed if I had failed to meet your honest face.

(*Dance of the Daisy and Buttercup.*)

(*To the Columbine.*)

Sweet flow'ret, what tidings dost thou bring
To gladden earth this early spring?

* Adapted from Miss Starr's "Songs of a Lifetime."

Columbine.

Fair Queen, the learned ones have called me
Columbine—

Type of the Dove which came
In living tongues of flame,
With golden mouth and speech,
The Risen Christ to preach,—
The Crucified
Of Passiontide,
Now in this Paschal Season glorified.

Queen.

Glorious indeed is thy labor, fair Columbine !

(*To the Lily of the Valley.*)

Shy little one hiding your head, whence do you
come?

Lily of the Valley.

Lapt in lowly glade,
My Queen, beneath the greenwood shade,
From wanton eyes I hide ;
But He values the least that bide,
And said of me,
That though nor care nor art be mine
The loom to ply, the thread to twine,
Yet born to bloom and fade,
In still a lovelier robe arrays
Than even in Israel's brightest days
His wealthiest King arrayed.

Queen.

Ah, yes !

No flower amid the garden fairer grows
Than thou, sweet lily of the lowly vale !

(*To the Water Lily.*)

Another lily have we here,—

O star on the breast of the river,
 O marvel of bloom and grace!
 Did you fall right down from heaven
 Out of the sweetest place?
 You are white as the thoughts of an angel,
 Your heart is steeped in the sun;
 Did you grow in the Golden City,
 My pure, my radiant one?

Water Lily.

Nay, nay! I fell not out of heaven,
 None gave me my saintly white;
 It slowly grew from the darkness,
 Down in the dreary night.
 From the ooze of the silent river
 I won glory and grace.
 White souls fall not:
 They rise to the sweetest place.

Queen.

True and sweet is your lesson, my pretty one!

(*To the Calla Lily.*)

My stately dame of dazzling white, a lily too art
 thou. What wilt thou this day record as thy
 mission here?

Lily.

This would I say, fair Queen:

My stem is verdant as the mossy bed
 Of earth on which they tread.

To them it is seen to terminate in a golden crown,
 which you see [*holds up flower*] is carefully encircled
 in a white and almost seamless robe. The one seam
 shows the chasm of death, through which all must
 pass to the eternal future, where alone the crown of

“Behold how I spread wide my mantle to catch the gold may be obtained. I would say to them; sun’s golden rays! I drink them all, and they are so abundant that they exclude every spot. Even so should purity leave no space for vice. And, oh —

I love to dress the God-made earth,

To smile in hall and bower!

But a sweeter place

Where I veil my face

Is the altar door, whence flows all grace,

Where the Mighty hides His power.

Queen.

Fairest of Flora’s lovely daughters,

Thou a type must be

Of virgin love and purity.

Thou art wise in thine innocence, dear Lily. Long may Heaven spare thee as a guide to those who need thy instruction!

(To the Lilac.)

Sweet child of the joyous springtime, what sayest thou to mortals? What useful lesson wouldst thou impress upon their minds by thy early presence?

Lilac.

My Queen, I would show to all that it is not the part of wisdom to droop in discouragement. Even though the sky be overcast, I know the glorious sun still lies beyond, and that he will soon draw aside the veil which now for a time obscures his brilliancy; and so I keep constantly looking upward, not knowing at what moment the veil may part. Without stooping to earth, I scatter my odors around, as I would

have them scatter deeds of kindness. And, oh, how sweet it is to feel

Ourself exalted in a lovely soul,
To know our joys make glow another's cheek !

Queen.

O Lilac, would that Heaven might grant them power to follow thy inspirations !

(To the Snowball.)

Well, my beautiful spherical bloom, what sayest thou to the dweller on earth? I see by thy numerous petals that "virtues cluster round thee."

Snowball.

Yes, fair lady, behold my numerous petals ! [*Shows flower.*] They are small truly, but it matters not : they are all united by a tender cord to my generous heart, whence they draw their vitality. Singly, separately, our petals represent the separate virtues, which are numerous indeed ; and when happily united in the heart imbued with divine love, they show forth in all their beauty and loveliness the harmonious mingling of all the Christian graces.

Queen.

Dear Snowball, not to the great, the mighty or the valiant alone shall praise be awarded ; but also unto those who, like thee, happily combine in blessed harmony all that is generous, noble and good in poor fallen humanity ; and—

Cherish within their souls whatever brings
Moments of sweet communion with high thought,
And tender eloquence, and bear aloft
On wide spirit wings of holy prayer.

(To the Dandelion.)

Dear common flower that growest beside the way,
 Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
 First pledge of blithesome May,
 Which children pluck and full of pride uphold,
 High-hearted buccaneers o'erjoyed that they
 An Eldorado in the grass have found,
 Which not the rich earth's ample round
 May match in wealth!
 What news from Heaven dost bring? *

Dandelion.

My Queen,

Gold such as mine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
 Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
 Nor wrinkled the lean brow
 Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease.
 I am Spring's largess, which she scatters now
 To rich and poor alike with lavish hand;
 Though most hearts never understand
 To take it at God's value, but pass by
 The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.
 How like a prodigal doth Nature seem
 When I, for all my gold, so common am!
 I teach man to deem
 More sacredly of every human heart,
 Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
 Of Heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
 Did they but pay the love they owe,
 And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
 On all these living pages [*shows petals*] of God's book.

Queen.

Dear Dandelion,

The sight of thee shall call the robin's song,
 To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;

* Lowell.

The eyes thou givest me
 Are in the heart and heed not space of time.
 And pure, untainted souls
 Who've kept or gained
 Primeval innocence
 Shall listen as if an angel sing
 With news of Heaven, which he can bring.
 Thou art more dear to me
 Than all the prouder summer blooms may be.*

(*To the Chrysanthemum.*)

What sayest thou, resplendent bloom? I know
 some boon thou bringest: pray tell it us.

Chrysanthemum.

Royal Queen, it is mine to steal softly into the
 presence of those I seek to comfort. The closing year
 robs the earth of blooms; but I bid them remem-
 ber that the chill sods can hide them only for a time,
 while they rest; and that they will hail the resurrec-
 tion of the Lord of all. I am the emblem of love,
 that purest and holiest of the soul's emotions. It
 gives no note of warning when about to perform
 some act of kindness, and seeks not the applause of a
 gazing world, but is actuated by a higher motive—
 even a desire to do good that others may be happy.

Queen.

Truly, fair flower, thou hast a noble motive for
 thy bloom.

(*To the Rose.*)

Rosa, princess thou art!
 Thy beauty wins my heart

* Ibid.

By its unsullied grace.
There is no show of art
In thy sweet, radiant face.

Rose.

My sister flowerets make me blush with shame,
that I who have been voted the loveliest of all thy
subjects, can lay claim to so little that is instructive.
Yet—stay! ah yes, I have something, *much*, to lift me
above the vanity of men! Have I not been chosen
as a name for the purest, the holiest of mortal maid-
ens, the Virgin Mother? “Rosa Mystica” she is
called, and I have been consecrated to crown her.
May I not, then, assume that in my heart are all the
virtues that should fill the heart of man, from which
the perfume of a holy example is distilled; and that
love, “heaven-born charity,” should be the greatest
virtue of those who have been loved by the thorn-
crowned Son and this Mystical Rose?

Queen.

Ah, truly are you honored, Rosa mine!

Truly such strange power is given
To lowly flowers like dew from heaven;
For lessons of wisdom pure that rise
From some clear fountain in the skies,
How true in all their goings,
As if their very soul did know
The secrets of his flowings! *

And now let us all, my fair and loyal subjects, give
to each and all of those who look upon us a word of
counsel ere we bid them farewell.

* Faber.

(*To the Audience.*)

To all we now behold in life
 One parting word be ours :
 Your minds with noblest thought be rife,
 Be fresh and fair as flowers.
 From guilt and all pollution free,
 Look upward to the skies.
 Ye fade and die not soon as we :
 Yours is a fadeless prize.
 While our existence soon is past
 And we are known no more,
 Yours, endless, is designed to last
 Upon the eternal shore.
 Then cherish well each message sent
 In mercy from above ;
 Serve and obey while life is lent
 The God whose name is Love !

(*Waving her wand, the Queen signals the Flowers to depart.*)

Chorus.

(*Flowers wave adieus with garlands. Stand, if there is a drop curtain; if not, curtesy off or dance off; Queen last.*)

Good-bye, good-bye, ye mortals fair!
 Ye fade and die not soon as we :
 While our existence soon is past,
 Yours, endless, is designed to last,—
 Yours an immortal prize
 Upon the eternal shore.

Then cherish well each message sent,—
 Then cherish well each message sent !
 Good-bye ! good-bye ! good-bye ! good-bye !
 Good-bye ! good-bye ! ye mortals fair !

Ye fade and die not soon as we :
Then cherish well, then cherish well
Each message sent from Heaven above.
Good-bye ! good-bye ! good-bye !
Good-bye ! good-bye ! good-bye !
Good-bye ! good-bye ! *

* Adapted from "Choice Vocal Duets," published by C. N. Ditson, New York.